

**In The Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A motor vehicle comprising:  
a body having a front end, a rear end and a roof; a plurality of wheels coupled to said body;  
a rear structural member located at said rear end of said body;  
a trailer hitch attached to said structural member;  
a pair of brackets attached to said structural member and spaced a predetermined distance apart;  
a rear bumper configured to both cover said structural member and to allow for access to said brackets; and  
a step pivotally coupled to said brackets and operative to articulate about an axis between ~~[[a]]~~ first and second ~~position~~ positions, with said brackets being attached to said structural member such that said trailer hitch is operational when said step is in either of said first or second positions.
2. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said rear structural member is formed with said brackets integral therewith.
3. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said brackets are independent pieces and are attached to said rear structural member by one of welding, bolting, and riveting means.
4. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said brackets extend a predetermined distance from said structural member and said bumper.
5. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said step is u-shaped having two leg members, with one of said leg members each attached to each of said brackets, and a planar member disposed between said leg members and wherein said planar member has a first side and a second side.
6. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 5, wherein said planar member is substantially vertically oriented when said step is in said first position, and substantially horizontally oriented to provide a step when in said second position.

7. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 5, wherein said first side of said step provides a stepping surface when said step is in said second position and wherein said first side includes a plurality of traction improving grooves extending perpendicular to said axis for the length of said planar member.

8. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 5, wherein said leg members are contoured to render said step flush with said bumper when said step is in said first position.

9-10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising a lockout mechanism for said step.

12. (Original) A motor vehicle according to claim 11, wherein said lockout mechanism is a spring loaded sliding lockout key comprising:

a sliding pin having a first and second end; a handle attached to the first end of said pin; a spring positioned on the second end of said pin; and

a retainer positioned on said second end of said pin operative to hold said spring in place.

13. (Withdrawn) A step for use with a motor vehicle comprising:

a pair of brackets configured for coupling to a motor vehicle, each of said brackets having a first sleeve adapted to permit rotational mounting of a step thereto; and

a u-shaped member comprising a pair of legs, with each of said legs having a first and second end, and a planar member disposed therebetween at said second end of said legs, with each of said legs also having a second sleeve located at said first end and configured for mating with said first sleeves of said brackets, and wherein said u-shaped member is operative to articulate about an axis between a first and second position once said u-shaped member is coupled to said brackets.

14. (Withdrawn) A step according to Claim 13, wherein said legs are contoured in order to be flush with a bumper of a motor vehicle when said step is in an "up" or stowed position.

15. (Withdrawn) A step according to Claim 13, wherein said planar member has a first side and a second side, and wherein said first side includes a plurality of traction improving grooves extending the length of said planar member from one of said legs to the other of said legs.

16. (Withdrawn) A step according to Claim 13, further comprising a lockout mechanism.

17. (Withdrawn) A step according to Claim 13, wherein said lockout mechanism is a spring loaded sliding lockout key comprising: a sliding pin having a first and second end;

a handle attached to the first end of said pin;

a spring positioned on the second end of said pin; and

a retainer positioned on said second end of said pin operative to hold said spring in place.